824 The most common of the Hanashiro trees are (1) the banyan or gajimaru, or yōsu. This tree is a common sight with its long roots growing around and through the stone fences. The tree with [731] its roots bracing the stone fences is excellent typhoon protection for the village. (2) The usuku (Japanese scientific name, the akou) resembles the gajimaru in appearance and serves the same purpose. The fukugi (Garcinia spicata Hook) and an occasional cycad [417] are common windbreaks. These trees are almost invariably in combination with stone fences, made of blocks, or with fences made of loose stones which have settled and been bound together by small plant roots. Village typhoon protection is a simple but effective combination of stone, shrubs, and trees. There is also an occasional kuroki [534] (kurchi in Okinawan), from whose trunk the samisen, the stringed musical instrument, is made, and the palm (shuro).

There are wild plants in each of the areas but their importance has also declined. Among these is the pandanus (the adan, Japanese scientific name, the takonoki). This plant was plentiful before the war, but is now scarce except in the mountain area. It can occasionally be seen in genya land or in small clumps on an outcrop. The blades of the pandanus are long and hard, with a row of spines down both sides of the blade. It has had several uses. Formerly it was the common material for making slippers (zori), hats, cigarette cases, and hand- [463] bags. These home industries have all but disappeared, but old people [887] occasionally do a little. In preparing the pandanus blades for use, the thorns are removed and several strips are made. These are then boiled, dried, and smoothed out. Then they are woven into the desired pattern. A first class pandanus blade is about 5 feet long. In the [782] celebration of O-Bon, the fruit of the pandanus may be offered as food to the ancestors.

Another plant occasionally used is the getto, known also in Okinawa as sannin or muchigasa. Its chief use is in the festival of the 8th day of the 12th lunar month. At this time, rice cakes (mochi) are wrapped up in its long and wide and flexible fibres. These wrappings, often made by children, are hung from the ceiling or from the wall. The stem of this plant was much used in the past for rope.

824 The nigana (njana in Okinawan, Ixeris dentata Nakai) is still
262 used in this area as a food and medicine. It has an exceedingly bitter
757 root, about 1/8 of an inch in diameter in a mature plant. The root is put in hot water, and the liquid drunk as a stomach medicine. The leaves, not so bitter as the root, have a sour, slightly bitter taste. They are often served with the white cuttlefish (shiroi-ikka).

The ōbako (known in Okinawan as the hirawakusa or hirawagusa, Plantago Asiatica L, "Japanese ribwort") is used as a medicine and as a food. When vegetables are scarce, it is eaten as a green. As a medicine, the leaf is heated over a fire and the hot leaf is then pressed over a swelling.

852
527
[533]
[562]
[534]

a harsh, often rasping voice. Only men play the Okinawan samisen, a stringed instrument slightly different from its Japanese counterpart. Men also join in the dancing.

In a village parties on the fifth or sixth day after the birth of a child and on his first birthday happen frequently. They are an important part of social life. A relative or a friend is always celebrating one or the other occasion, either in the village or in a neighboring one. These celebrations increase, especially for the men, the number of social occasions and recreational opportunities during the year in a culture where holidays and rest days are comparatively few. (There are no weekly rest days or week ends).

After the first birthday, little attention is paid to the succeeding ones until the thirteenth. The child's experience from the 861 time he begins to walk until he reaches school comes from family life and neighborhood play. In my observation, there is no rigid, customary way of bringing up the child. It is toilet trained around 863 one year of age. This does not seem to be forced. Training comes through imitation. Parents do not punish the child for indiscretions, though they are quick to lift him off the mat if he begins wetting. With young boys, the father may make a hissing sound while the child's penis is out. One has the impression that it is a gradual transition, mostly effected by imitation or gentle suasion.

304 Male children are not circumcised. Circumcision is known only to those who have learned of it through books, foreign residence, or from others who have this information.[9]

867 In early training, boys are not taught that they are superior to girls. But when she reaches school age, the girl is likely to be kept 562 busier around the house. Before the war, there may have been a greater subordination of girls to boys. But any conscious training of girls to subordinate themselves to boys is unnecessary. The child grows up in a culture in which the father is waited on, the sons favored in inheritance, and in which the men have a richer social life.

855 Parents are kind to their children. They seldom spank a child, 593 though an exasperated parent may give the child a sharp slap. There is little nagging or shouting at children in anger. In my opinion,

9 Two young men, school teachers about 23 years old, expressed great astonishment when asked about circumcision. They did not know it existed.

585
date of their birth (using the Japanese reign date), where they had 576
gone to school and their present occupations. This was done separately
for each. After this was over, the bride and groom stood silently [537]
and politely, but without outward expression, while three guests in
turn, previously chosen, made speeches, offering their congratulations
and best wishes. On this particular occasion, the principal of the
school at which the bride was teaching, the principal of the school at
which the groom was a teacher, and a mutual friend of the couple spoke.

585
These proceedings do not receive the undivided attention of the 273
guests who have been drinking sake for some time. On the tops of the 535
tables, dancing in the traditional Okinawan manner and the accompanying 533
singing have begun. The dances and songs, usually performed by men in 562
their forties and fifties, were done with grace. These are part of all
social gatherings of any consequence.

The sober attitudes of the work day are cast aside. The best [247]
clothes have been put on. There is a great contrast between the bare-
footed partially clothed farmer or fisherman of the daytime and his
appearance at social occasions. These events are conducted with dignity
and poise, at least until the sake consumption has risen to a high
point. The party then becomes a noisy melee of dancing, singing, and
talking, but without quarrelling or fighting. There is little self-
consciousness in entertaining others. Talented guests do not have to
be cajoled into performing. Dancing, singing, and samisen playing con- [534]
tinue spontaneously, with another performer beginning after one has
finished. The wedding party lasts from about 5 to 8, but many of the
guests stay much later until the sake is gone.

Following the san-san-kudo, another but more private ceremony [262]
took place while the guests were entertaining themselves. In the
wedding room, colored cakes and tea were placed on a small table. The
female relatives of the bride and groom, mothers and sisters mostly,
sat opposite one another and ate cakes and drank the tea together. This
ceremony indicated the willingness of the bride's family to give up
the daughter, and of the groom's family to receive her. After this 583
ceremony, the bride's gifts from her parents were carried in. These
vary with the family's wealth. In this case, they were a chest of
drawers, a mirror, a heavy comforter, pillows, and a mosquito net.
Before the war, gifts were more lavish than now. The usual presents now
are a large chest of drawers (tansu), two heavy quilts or comforters
(futon), a mirror (kagami), two Japanese type pillows (makura), and a
large mosquito net (kaya). A poor family would be most likely to omit
the chest of drawers. A new kimono and money may be included.

A Y20 note is the usual gift of an ordinary guest at a wedding. 431
Closer friends will give about Y100. There is no uniform practice
about gifts from the groom's to the bride's family. About Y1000 may
be presented prior to marriage. The bride's family uses the money to
purchase the wedding gifts.

The day following the marriage, there is another ceremony, this 000

871 and the more advanced the school, the truer this is. Friendships
512 are made early with children of nearby villages. Marriage may be the result of early school acquaintance, encouraged by the acceptance of free choice in marriage. A young adult has a scattering of friendships in the villages of his township. These class friendships are strong in school, in the teens, and early twenties. By the late twenties, the circle of friendships has broadened.

182 One of the most significant links between the family, village,
526 and school is the annual athletic meet (undōkai). It is held in the fall. Preparations for this event are long and involve almost everybody.[5]

526 About a month before it is held, the meet is the topic of
[875] innumerable conversations. School children practice singing and athletic dancing drills at home. School teachers, who do most of the organizational work, practice with painful cacophony on their trumpets and clarinets. On the streets and lanes of Minatogawa, young men from 17
[534] to 23 practice broad jumping late into the night. Shortly before the meet, all normal school activities stop. The teachers paint signs, mimeograph programs, and plan the order of the various events. The school officials have interminable committee meetings.

There is much bustle, laundering, hair washing, and cooking in a village the day before the meet. Special lunches including rice dyed
[262] red, bean curd, slices of fish paste, beef or pork are prepared. This field day is the closest approach to a picnic the Okinawans experience.

In good weather, the meet has a large attendance. A reserved area, with school desks and chairs is set aside for special guests. A person
[576] entering the reserved section to take his seat bows to the mayor and the group, steps forward a few paces, bows again, and takes his seat.

The mayor of the township presides over the meeting relieved by the vice-mayor or other school or village or township officials. On one day of the autumn meet, the mayor remained seated throughout the morning and afternoon in a drizzling rain. It was his duty, assisted by the principal and the teachers of the school, to give out the prizes.

Relay races, girls' dances, races and dashes for various age groups are endless. At present, the meeting is not confined to school children, but the younger men and women are included as well. The Young Men's Association is very active. Special events are included. In the Women's Association event, there was a mother and child race. In one case, a mother who entered the race with a child on her back and her young son as

[119] 5 These remarks are based on observations in Minatogawa, Oushichan, and Hanashiro villages, and on attendance at the Oushichan meet in November 1951. From discussions, I am certain they are very similar in Matsuda, in fact all over the island.

2:Maretzki & Maretzki E-5 (1954-1955) 1963 AC7 Okinawa AC7
Taira

preciative statement or an introduction. It is polite to make the rounds in this fashion, to sit before another guest, fill his cup and utter some polite phrases, then wait for a return compliment.

By the time men—and a little later women—have been served food and drink in some quantity, there is no more stiffness in the room, for with every cup of sake animation and voice volume increase. Speeches that have not yet come to a conclusion show definite signs of inspiration; each speaker who sits down is trumped in eloquence by his successor. Long after serious oratory has been dispensed with, a happy celebrant may get up and sonorously hold forth. During fieldwork the authors were frequently the aim of such addresses. In one of them a farmer, quiet and serious during everyday routine but known for his merriment and wit when in his cups, held forth on a future visit to Taira by these Americans. "There will be skyscrapers," he said in a booming voice, "subways, wide lanes and bright lights," and on he went to the delight of everybody.

On such occasions Tairans display their skill in playing with words and their ability to act and mimic. The assistant to the headman, similarly quiet on ordinary days, several months after our arrival came into a room where the authors were present during one of the many post-New Year celebrations. At an advanced stage of merriment himself, he turned to his host and by way of introduction said that he had just come from Hong Kong. "Oh, from Hong Kong," the host said, "that is why you cough so, kong, kong, kong," adding that he himself came from New York (pronounced in Japanese similar to *nyūyoku*, meaning "a bath"), whereupon the arriving guest went into the motions of someone taking a bath, saying "ah from *nyūyoku*," and so the fun went on, mostly as a take-off on the American guests who were present. This reminded the clerk of another story at the expense of the authors, which he told with gusto. "That first day he came to Taira, Maretzki came up to me when I was carrying pebbles from the beach and asked if he could help since he was going to haul pebbles too. Then he started to introduce himself, and I only understood 'Umaretsuki' (similar to Japanese for 'temperament') . . . I waited and waited for a story, but nothing followed. I did not know what to say." He had never repeated this story during many sober encounters.

At another event, when several teachers were present, one of the men, after much gaiety, turned to a female teacher whose husband had left for the city to find a job and called over: "Hey, your mosquito netting must be wide now, huh?" The woman blushed, covered her mouth with a handkerchief and laughed.

The evening is never old before one man, or several who are known

574 for their special skills on the samisen (a three-stringed banjolike in-
533 strument covered with snake hide), open the singing and dancing with
[534] the first, traditional song, *Kagiyadefu*, a solemn and slow piece which
is rendered in the forced, nasal voice peculiar to Okinawan song. Im-
574 mediately after this, the tempo changes, the music takes a fast, stirring
535 beat, and the first dancer, a man, gets up. Dances at social events can be performed by a single man or a woman, or by several dancers of either sex, but traditional group dances are done by women only. Taira people like to dance some of the many Okinawan dances in which a story, sung by the vocalists, is acted out. For example, a popular dance deals with a fisherman and his catch. A hat, hastily put on, and a basket under the arm suggest the role of the dancer, his body and hand movements the actions. No one is much concerned with accurate or highly artistic rendition of these familiar dances; many performances become simply improvisations in which one male dancer is joined by other men or women who, dancing freely, add their own versions to established movements. There is much applause and laughter from the audience around the dance floor, which sings and animatedly claps hands in rhythm to the music. As all, men and older women, imbibe more sake, they become gayer, and more talents are unleashed. Amusing presenta-
[831] tions of a husband and wife, in which sometimes aggression and sexual interaction are acted out playfully, are received with great hilarity by the audience. If such a suggestive performance is given by an old woman and a young man, it seems to appear even funnier. As they get tired, dancers leave the floor, making room for others.

[562] Not everybody participates with equal lack of restraint. Younger
[273] women do not drink sake and show much more inhibition; they dance established versions of Okinawan dances in group performances if called on, usually before the merrymakers take over. Often a mother, young child in arm, cannot resist. Passing the infant to a relative or a girl sitting nearby, she joins other dancers and becomes carried away by the spirit of the event. On one occasion a young woman, seeing her aged mother display her talents on the dance floor in comical movements to the delight of everybody, angrily demanded that she come home right away, only to be rejoined with a taunting remark by the old lady, who defiantly swallowed some more sake and continued her entertainment.

527 Not a single event that we attended was marred by any serious un-
273 pleasantness. No guest was ever seen to become sick, although some
578 men drank themselves into a stupor. Here and there a paper screen may
574 be broken as a result of a tumbling body, or a hard bang against a thin panel may set the house shaking. But the end of such a feast

The leaves of the yūna tree are a native
311 substitute for toilet paper, and are still used in some villages, though people
824 deny that the practice continues. When pressed they may intimate that so-and-
[514] so, "the poor family over the hill", retains the practice. Banyan trees fur-
[178] nish leaves for green manure, as do many other varieties. Before the war many
people grew kuroki for eventual use in the making of samisens. The top of the
● [534] tree was cut when young so that it would become stubby and thick. The neigh-
boring village of Tsukazan boasts of a samisen-maker whose fame has taken him
to Naha. The 'kusunoki' tree is considered to be the best tree to plant near
the house, for it discourages termites.

241 Fertilizers Okinawan farmers in most areas utilize the traditional night soil
and green manures, as well as the modern synthetic fertilizers.
[514] Almost every house has two toilets. The one not in use is utilized as a
[237] night-soil decay pit. Pig manure is mixed with the human excreta, water added,
and the whole let set for about a fortnight before use on the fields. Use of
animal manure in the paddies was abandoned with the introduction of the new
variety of rice. Animal manure produced good heads on the old variety but makes
heavy stalks only on the new.

241
824 Green manure is extensively used as a plant nutrient in the paddy
fields. Indeed, some paddies in winter are devoted to the raising of green
manure, which is plowed under before spring planting. Outer leaves of cabbage
are fed to goats to become manure for the dry fields, or the leaves are
trampled into the mud of the paddy to decay. Thistles, 'kuwazu-imo' leaves,
and tree leaves of the yūna and banyan are only a few of the many types of
green manure. Compost, or 'taihi', is made for the dry fields and some paddies
by mixing animal manure with 'genya' grasses, rice straw, and other plant re-
mains. Before the war, compost was not used for vegetables, because it would
cause a shortage in the amount available for the cane fields. Nowadays com-
post is more available, and many vegetables assume huge proportions. One
Nanahan farmer produced a wax melon weighting 97 'kin', or 128 pounds.

241 Commercial fertilizers available to the farmers include ammonium sul-
phate ('ryusan ammoniya', 'ryūan'), synthesized fertilizer ('kasei hiryo'),
ammonium nitrate ('ryusan kari'), nitrogen-lime ('sekkai chisso'), urea
('nyōso'), potassium chloride ('enkakari'), and superphosphate of lime ('Kar-
insan sekkai'). Ammonium sulphate is preferred for sugar cane. During the
last four or five years the Agricultural Federation ('Nōren') in Naha has en-
forced a tie-in sale so that when a farmer buys two sacks of ammonium sul-
phate, he must also buy one sack of superphosphate of lime. Farmers in
Tomoyose quite often dispose of the latter by dumping it beside the road, as
they believe that it is not good for the soil found on their farms. One
enterprising Nanahan farmer, who for several years was a member of the
Kochinda-son agricultural committee, enquires about the cast-off fertilizer,
and when he finds it he uses it to good effect. When he was interviewed con-
cerning this, he expressed anger at what he considered the backwardness of
his neighbors.

[177] Okinawans were first introduced to chemical fertilizer in the mid-
twenties, when a black fertilizer appeared. This was later replaced by the
various white products, which since some time before the war have been supple-
mented by soybean waste when available.